

Appl. No. 09/508,405

REMARKS

Claims 31-34, 36, 37 and 41 are pending in the application. Claim 31 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein and Applicant reserves their right to pursue the same in a divisional application.

1. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and/or 103

The Examiner has rejected claim 31 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Andtsjo et al. (WO 97/13790). Without conceding the propriety of the rejections and solely to expedite the receipt of a Notice of Allowance, Applicant has elected to cancel claim 31. The anticipation and obviousness rejections have therefore been rendered moot. Reconsideration and removal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

2. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that claims 32-34, 36, 37 and 41 are allowed.

Applicant believes that the foregoing claim amendment has placed the case in condition for allowance and earnestly requests the prompt issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), Applicant(s) respectfully petition(s) for a three (3) month extension of time for filing a reply in connection with the present application, and the required fee of \$980.00 is to be charged to the Deposit Account.

Should there be any outstanding matters to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Leonard R. Svensson (Reg. No. 30,330) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

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If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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<u>Frank B. Felt</u>	
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Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

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